

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The A~~ method of forming a fine pattern ~~according to claim 1, further comprising a step~~ the steps of:

forming a silicon-oxide-based film over a substrate by using SiH₄ and N₂O as material gases at a reaction temperature of over 400 °C, wherein, in the step of forming the silicon-oxide-based film, a nitrogen content of a surface of the silicon-oxide-based film is made to about a value of 0.01 atm% to 0.08 atm%;

forming a chemically-amplified photoresist layer on the silicon-oxide-based film;

transferring a mask pattern onto the chemically-amplified photoresist layer upon exposure through a mask; and

exposing the surface of the silicon-oxide-based film to plasma atmosphere of O₂ or N₂O between the step of forming the silicon-oxide-based film and the step of forming the chemically-amplified photoresist layer.

4. - 5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The method of forming a fine pattern according to claim [[1]] 3, wherein the silicon-oxide-based film is deposited by means of a plasma CVD technique.

7. (Canceled).

8. (Currently Amended) The method of forming a fine pattern according to claim [[1]] 3, wherein the silicon-oxide-based film is formed at a reaction temperature of 450 °C or more.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of manufacturing a semiconductor device according to claim ~~[[5]]~~ 10, wherein the silicon-oxide-based film is formed at a reaction temperature of 450 °C or more.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device according to ~~claim 5~~, further comprising ~~a step~~ the steps of:

forming a silicon-oxide-based film over an underlying layer, wherein the silicon-oxide-based film is formed by using SiH₄ and N₂O as material gases at a reaction temperature of over 400 °C such that a surface of the silicon-oxide-based film has a nitrogen content of about 0.01 atm% to 0.08 atm%;

exposing ~~[[the]]~~ a surface of the silicon-oxide-based film to plasma atmosphere of O₂ or N₂O ~~between the step of forming the silicon-oxide-based film and the step of forming the chemically-amplified photoresist layer;~~

forming a chemically-amplified photoresist layer on the silicon-oxide-based film;

transferring a mask pattern onto the chemically-amplified photoresist layer upon exposure through a mask; and

etching the underlying layer by way of a resist pattern, to thereby form a fine pattern in the underlying layer.